[*English*]

Expansion of Shipping Industry

2860. SHRI VIJAY NAVAL PATIL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the estimate of additional cargo tonnage likely to be generated during the next three years; and

(b) the steps taken to increase the shipping fleet to meet the increasing traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) The Working Group on Shipping set up by Planning Commission for the period 1990–95 has assessed the requirement of tonnage at 7.73 Million DWT upto 1994–95. The actual tonnage that may be acquired would depend mainly on the availability of resources including foreign exchange.

(b) The Government have taken a number of steps to increase the shipping fleet to meet the increasing traffic. These include:–

(i) Streamlining of licensing procedures which has enabled quicker ship acquisition in the fluactuating International Market.

(ii) Revised age norms for acquisition of second-hand vessels.

(iii) Permitting Shipowners to acquire bulk carriers of 10–30,000 DWT without approaching the Ship Acquisition Licensing Committee;

(iv) Proposals for replacement of existing tonnage will not be placed before the Ship Acquisition Licensing Committee, if the replacement proposal is within 25% in excess or less than the tonnage to be replaced.

(v) Permitting Private Shipping Companies to place orders on Indian shipyards without reference to assessed requirements.

[*Translation*]

Customs Duty Evasion

2862. SHRI RAJESH KUMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some cases of customs duty evasion of more than one thousand crore rupees by misusing the Advance Free Import Licence have come to notice of the Government;

(b) If so, the details of such cases during last three years and action taken there on; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to check such evasion in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (c). No case involving Customs duty evasion of more than rupees one thousand crores by misusing the Duty Exemption Entitlement Scheme has been noticed. The Customs authorities are vigilant against the evasion of Customs duty.

[*English*]

Priority sector lending by Banks

2863. SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating of reducing the sahre of priority sector lending by commercial banks; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b). The Committee on The Financial System (Narasimham Committee) has suggested in their report, submitted to the Government in 1991, that the existing directed credit programmes should be gradually phased out. At present, the Priority Sector consists of banks advances to agriculture, small scale industries, small road and water transport operators, retail trade, small business, professional and self employment, State sponsored organisations of SC/ST for purchase and supply of inputs, education, consumption loans and housing loans. In terms of recommendations of Narasimham Committee the re-defined Priority Sector shall have small and marginal farmers, tiny sector of industry, small business and transport operators, village and cottage industries, rural artisans and other weaker sections. At present Reserve Bank of India has fixed a target of 40% of lending by banks to the Priority Sector. The Narasimham Committee has recommended that for the re-defined Priority Sector the target should be 10% of the aggregate bank credit and a review may be undertaken after three years to see if the directed limit needs to be continued. the Government is yet to take a final view on the recommendations of the Narasimham Committee.

Modernisation of Ports

2864. SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD:
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry has urged the Government to immediately undertake an extensive modernisation programme of ports for creating adequate capacity to cope with the requirements of shippers;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard;

(c) whether due to inadequate modernisation and development of port facilities, the ports remained ill equipped to serve the needs of shippers and exporters; and

(d) if so, the steps the Government propose to take to modernise and develop various ports in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) No proposal has been received in this Ministry.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d). Modernisation is a continuous process. The capacity of the ports which was 20 million tonnes in 1951 has increased to 168 million tonnes in 1991–92. The requirements of Indian Shippers and Exporters have been met.

In the 8th Plan, the Government proposes to further improve the functioning of the ports by concentrating on:

1. Development of infrastructure in ports in consonance with the overall economic growth;

2. Increasing level of containerisation in the country;

3. Deepening of ports for handling the bigger sized ships in ore handling ports;